

## FOUNDERED IN A CYCLONE.

WRECK OF THE CITY OF VERA CRUZ.  
DISPATCHES FROM FLORIDA—WRECKAGE FOUND ON THE COAST NEAR ST. AUGUSTINE—RECEIPT OF THE NEWS IN THIS CITY—ANXIOUS INQUIRIES BY FRIENDS—LIST OF PASSENGERS, OFFICERS AND CREW.

Dispatches from St. Augustine, Fla., state that the wreck of the steamship City of Vera Cruz was first feared Tuesday, when masses of wreckage and five bodies were washed ashore about thirty miles below that city. From marks on the mail matter found, the conclusion was reached that the City of Vera Cruz must be lost. Other vessels report a great cyclone off the coast of Florida about August 28, and many have been escaped wreck. The owners of the steamship in this city, P. Alexandre & Sons, still hope that the vessel is not lost. There were twenty-nine passengers on board, and the crew consisted of forty-nine persons, including Captain Van Sice and the other officers.

## FIRST TOKENS OF DISASTER.

THE COAST FOR MILES STREWN WITH WRECKAGE—FIVE BODIES CAST ASHORE—EVIDENCE THAT THE VESSEL WAS THE VERA CRUZ.

SAVANNAH, Ga., Sept. 3.—A special dispatch to the Morning News from St. Augustine says: The beach north and south of the St. Augustine Light, and as far south as Matanzas Inlet, is strewn with wreckage, dry goods, provisions and merchandise of every description. The first evidence of a wreck was discovered near the light-house on Tuesday, and on following the coast to the north and south the story of a terrible disaster was revealed. Ten miles below Matanzas some trunks and a mail bag were found. The latter, which was marked with a tag, "Return to New-York," was opened and found to contain letters dated, "New-York, August 25, 1880, per City of Vera Cruz."

There were also found bills of lading for goods by the steamship Vera Cruz. Near the place where the mail bag and trunks were found the bodies of three men, a woman and a child were discovered and buried by the people in the neighborhood. All valuables and jewelry were taken from the bodies so that the remains could be identified. All the wreckage shows that the steamship Vera Cruz, which sailed from New-York on August 25 for Havana, either went ashore or foundered just off the Florida coast on Monday night or Tuesday morning, during the heavy storm, and all on board perished.

## NEWS AND SCENES IN THIS CITY.

AGENTS AT THE COMPANY'S OFFICE—THE OWNERS' BELIEF THAT THE VESSEL IS NOT LOST—INQUIRIES OF ANXIOUS FRIENDS.

The reported wreck of the steamship City of Vera Cruz, of the New-York, Havana and Mexican Mail Steamship Line of Alexandre & Sons, created much comment and speculation in maritime circles yesterday, and awakened great anxiety among those who have relatives and friends among the passengers and the crew. The vague and unsatisfactory character of the information upon which the report was based added to the attention the matter received.

The City of Vera Cruz, Captain Van Sice, sailed from New-York for Havana and Vera Cruz, August 25, with a crew of forty-nine and twenty-nine passengers. The story of her loss arose from reports that mail matter and baggage, which were recognized as belonging to her, had been washed ashore near St. Augustine, Florida, September 1. It was stated that several bills of lading of the City of Vera Cruz had been picked up, and that some of the mail matter bore the New-York postmark of August 25, the day on which the Vera Cruz sailed. It was even said that bodies had been received in New-York yesterday, or were said to have been received.

In response to a dispatch sent to St. Augustine asking for the postmarks of the letters washed ashore, Postmaster James received the following dispatch yesterday morning:

New-York postmark, twenty-eight; Paris postmark, twenty-eight; two packages of letters; five packages of mail matter.

This left no doubt in Mr. James's mind that the mail found at St. Augustine was that of the Vera Cruz. Mr. James said that it would take two days and four hours before the mails washed ashore could reach this city. He did not expect to receive them until to-morrow.

At the Maritime Exchange there was a diversity of opinion. Some of the members did not hesitate to express their belief that there was not evidence sufficient to warrant the belief that the vessel had gone down. It was not disputed that the mail matter and baggage might have been from the Vera Cruz, but it was claimed that their loss from the vessel might easily be explained by other hypotheses than by that of its destruction. The captains of vessels lately arrived at this port, which passed through the storm the Vera Cruz undoubtedly encountered, said yesterday that the hurricane was violent and dangerous; but those familiar with the City of Vera Cruz are of the belief that it was not a tempest sufficiently severe to destroy so good a ship.

Despite the rumors, the belief was strongly expressed at the office of Alexandre & Sons, at No. 33 Broadway, that the Vera Cruz was safe, and that definite information to that effect would be received as soon as the Havana cable was put in working order again. The office was the scene yesterday of unquiet activity and bustle from an early hour in the morning until a late hour in the afternoon. In addition to the usual business, which on Friday includes the payment of bills, the clerks were busy with the work of making out lists of the passengers and crew of the Vera Cruz and of answering questions relative to the cargo and insurances. From early morning there was a continued succession of calls from persons who had a personal interest in the fate of the passengers and crew, and some of the scenes were to the last degree exciting.

Shortly after noon a well-dressed young woman, who was evidently struggling hard to repress signs of distress or excitement, approached the desk of Mr. Alexandre and asked for information about the ship. She stated that her mother was the stewardess of the Vera Cruz. Partially comforted by the assurance that no one in the office believed that the steamer vessel had gone down, she sat upon a tall, sun-burned man whose gloomy countenance was expressive of hope abandoned, walked slowly into the office. The woman had no sooner seen him than she sprang forward and kissed him convulsively, and then began to cry. This was the brother of the stewardess, and he was greatly surprised to find his niece there. He took the young woman aside, but he gave her no comfort. He had formerly been to her and to others that the story of the loss would prove to be true. When he had gone away the niece sat in silent dejection, closely watching every newcomer, and listening eagerly to all conversation bearing upon the steamer and her probable fate.

In the afternoon a young woman, accompanied by a frightened-looking girl, entered the office. Her sobbing was heard before she could be seen. She went straight to the desk, and with such a voice as she could command, begged to be told what was known of the Vera Cruz. It was evident that

she had accepted the worst from the first. With sobs that she could not control, she said that she was the daughter of T. Thornton, the porter of the vessel. She said: "There is now left only my mother and me. My brother was on the Vera Cruz a year ago, but he caught the yellow fever and died. And now father has gone, too." She utterly refused to be comforted, and went away crying violently.

A well-dressed young man, who looked as if he had lost everything on earth that he cared for, came in late in the afternoon and asked for intelligence of the steamer. He was a Cuban and spoke only a few words of English. While going away he was spoken to by a Tribune reporter, to whom he said that he was the brother of Rafael Ayrie, a sketch of whose visit to New-York is given elsewhere.

There were several other scenes of a like character with those that have been narrated, and there was one scene of another nature that was worthy of mention because of its exhibition of a peculiar phase of human character. A small Spaniard, whose distressed look and agitated bearing gave the impression that he had suffered greatly in mind, and was certain to suffer greatly in his affections or purse, in case it proved that the Vera Cruz was lost, paced excitedly to and fro, and went from window to window. He was asked what interest he had in the steamer, and he volubly explained that he had four horses and two wagons on board. After this announcement interest in his sorrows had no further being.

## EFFORTS TO OBTAIN NEWS.

John Alexandre, of the firm of Alexandre & Sons, was at the office from an early hour in the morning until afternoon, when he went out for several hours to attend to matters of business. He was there for the double purpose of obtaining and giving information. He telegraphed early to the Mayor of St. Augustine, Fla., asking for detailed descriptions of the bodies and cargo marks of the goods said to have been washed ashore. His bearing was cheerful and buoyant, and he expressed the most confident belief in the safety of the Vera Cruz; and his evident sincerity gave a ray of hope to the most despondent, while his cheerful and unflinching courtesy won for him the good will of every person who found it necessary to approach him. He afforded every facility to obtain information to all who applied for it. There was only one thing he would not do, and that was to believe in the reported disaster. Said he to a reporter of the Tribune: "I cannot believe that the City of Vera Cruz has been lost in a gale, for she was the strongest wooden vessel in the world, and she was in charge of experienced and capable officers. Some years ago, when the agents of the Russian Government came to this country to buy a fleet, they cast eyes of admiration upon this ship, and wished to buy her. They were only prevented by the fact that we asked what they considered too high a price. I think it more than likely that the story about the mail bags and the trunk may be explained in a way that will justify my strong hope. The Mexican mail agent's statement was on the main deck, next to the baggage room, with which it communicated by means of a door. It is therefore possible that a heavy sea might have broken in the window of the agent's room and swept mail bags and baggage away. I cannot believe that a vessel of the strength of the Vera Cruz foundered in a sea where any other ship lived. She was a sister ship to the City of Havana, which was lost on a reef off the Mexican coast in 1875. This vessel, though subjected to the full force of the northern of the succeeding winter, was found a year after her loss, and as good as new. And last winter, when I was down there with General Grant, she was found as good as new. She was in our service. Mr. Harris, the first mate, was an experienced sailor; he had formerly been a captain. Mr. Nissen, the second mate, was an old sailor and a good man. Captain Van Sice wouldn't have any one but a competent man about him. The engineer, Miller, had been in our employ for years; in fact, he grew up with us. I had almost forgotten to say that when the City of Vera Cruz came in the last time, we went to the expense of putting her in the dock and having her examined. People laughed at us for taking this precaution with such a vessel. The Vera Cruz was insured for a part of her value; she was valued at \$250,000. The insurances were largely in English companies, and amount to probably 70 per cent of her value. The cargo, it may be stated, is valued at \$100,000 to \$150,000."

When spoken to some hours later Mr. Alexandre still clung to his belief that the Vera Cruz had not been lost, and it was evident that only positive and undoubted intelligence of that fact could change him. He said, in addition to what he had previously stated, that Captain Doan, who was in command of the City of Vera Cruz for two years, and who is now the commodore of the fleet of the Alexandre Line, is of the same opinion with him. That officer gave it as his belief that the Vera Cruz must have weathered any gale of which news has been received, and he has opinion on the fact that he had ridden out several severe gales in her, and had found her perfectly seaworthy.

Mr. Alexandre said that if the cable to Havana had not broken it would have been possible to determine the matter at once, and definitely. But though it was announced in the afternoon that the cable had been repaired and was in working order, nothing had been heard from Havana up to a late hour, when the office was closed, and orders were given that any dispatch that might come should be sent to Mr. Alexandre at his house. Several women, who had waited for hours for news, were compelled to go away unrelieved of their anxiety when the office doors were shut.

Mr. E. L. Dwyer, of the firm of Stoddard & Dwyer, of Mexico, was a passenger on the City of Vera Cruz on her last voyage from Mexico. He says that the passengers were so well pleased with Captain Van Sice and the other officers that they presented him with a written testimonial expressing their regard and esteem. These passengers included a large number of prominent Cubans, including Captain and Mrs. Martinez. The Vera Cruz, Mr. Dwyer says, was constructed of the best timber and was considered one of the best and strongest steamers in the Cuban and Mexican trade. Mr. Miller had been connected with the line several years and was deemed one of the most efficient men in the service. Francis Harris, Mr. Dwyer says, was one of the most careful and watchful men he ever knew. He had commanded both European and American vessels.

NO FURTHER NEWS TO DATE.

Mr. Alexandre sent two dispatches to Havana yesterday and one to St. Augustine, Fla., but up to midnight had received no reply either affirming or denying the loss of the Vera Cruz.

## LIST OF THE LOST.

NAMES OF THE PASSENGERS ON THE CITY OF VERA CRUZ AND OF THE OFFICERS AND CREW—PARTICULARS OF THE PERSONS ON BOARD.

The following list embraces the names of all the passengers and officers of the City of Vera Cruz when she left this port, with such particulars regarding them as could be learned among their friends in this city and vicinity:

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wounded by friends that he had fallen under the

weight of a box of cigars. He was taken to a

hospital and that he would be arrested. To avoid arrest

he fled from Havana and came to New-York, where he

was living with friends at Havana and from his

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Lord Hartington, replying to a declaration which waited upon him to urge the annexation of Candahar, and the Government was still considering the matter; but expressed strongly the opinion that the difficulties and intricacies of such a course would more than counterbalance any advantages of the acquisition.

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